



District 142

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Weekly Update



The Update Message from the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers representing Flight Attendants in the 2339 Local Lodges

Friday, December 12, 2008

IAM Pensions Much Better Than 401(k)s – With the downturn in the stock market, 401(k) plans have taken a hit. This is a major problem for working people who do not belong to unions and do not have a defined-benefit pension plan like our IAMNPP. Without pensions, millions of people must rely on their 401(k) and Social Security for their retirements. It's always better to have a defined benefit pension in addition to a 401(k), and our IAMNP is one of the best around. It has more than 1,700 contributing employers, more than \$7 billion in assets, nearly 70,000 participating members and 67,000 retirees and beneficiaries who enjoy the security of a sound financial future. When the stock market is in the free fall as it has been for months, the value of your 401(k) is also in free fall. For example, if you had \$200,000 in your 401(k) before the stock market decline, which has averaged around 30 percent, it means that you now have only \$140,000. For someone planning to retire in the near future that could be disastrous. But let's say you retire anyway and you need \$18,000 a year from your 401(k). If your money didn't grow, your 401(k) would be out of money in less than eight years. If your 401(k) declined in value, you would run out even sooner. Even if it did well, you might only get another few years out of it. Either way, it could be at zero within about 10 years or less. But if you had a defined-benefit pension plan that paid you \$18,000 a year, you would receive that amount for as long as you lived. You don't have to worry about how to invest to protect your pension. Most people are not experts on investments. The IAMNPP has experts on staff to manage our funds, people who do it every day and who have teams of experts and researchers to assist them. Of course, pensions have taken their own hits in our current economic downturn. But our pension plan is diversified in many investment categories, so it is protected against the full effects of the stock market collapse. Everything you have earned in your pension until this date cannot be taken away from you or lowered. There is nothing wrong with maintaining a 401(k) to supplement your pension, but it should never be the only retirement fund for you.



Tom Higginbotham
President & Directing
General Chairperson

The union met with the Coalition of Flight Attendants in New York City on December 10, 2008. Items on the agenda were the following; Follow up to January Bargaining Summit (discussion), briefing on Global Cabin Air Quality Executive Activities, discussion about flight crew difficulties with Canadian Immigration, Employee Free Choice Act and Employment Non-Discrimination Act, Reciprocal Cabin Seat Agreements, Biometric Screening, Re-regulation of the Airline Industry, becoming more active in the AFL-CIO constituency group "Pride at Work" and a negotiations update. The coalition will meet again the week of April 6th for a follow up bargaining summit since the majority of carriers in the coalition will be in negotiations in 2009. We will update you when more information is available about the summit.

Doctor-excused Absences may Equal Protected Leave Request – A ruling by the California Court of Appeal has employers looking at terminations based on unexcused leaves of absence. In *Henry Avila v. Continental Airlines, Inc.*, justices found that a trial court’s summary judgment in favor of the employer was wrong. The court further found that Continental had failed to follow the requirements of the California Family Rights Act by terminating Avila after he exceeded the company’s allowance of six absences in a “rolling” 12-month period. Whereas Continental argued it had not violated CFRA, which protects those with disabilities from discriminatory labor practices, because it was not given advance notice of the employee’s disability, which turned out to be pancreatitis. But the court’s majority said knowledge of Avila’s extended absence, along with the fact that he told coworkers he was ill—and most significantly—documents from his doctors (supplied to the employer after the fact) stipulating that his absences were medically excusable, combined to be the equivalent of Avila requesting CRFA leave.

URL:

<http://www.sfvbj.com/article.asp?aID=1597826.5507414.1713881.2576081.6276696.483&aID2=131828>

Crewmember Self-Defense Training

Newark Area

Essex County College Police Academy
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Contact:

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Class dates:

2008

December 18

2009

January 8, 15, 22, 29

February 5, 12, 24, 26

Houston Area

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Class dates:

2008

December 18

2009

January 6, 15

February 3, 18

March 10, 19

We would like to encourage all members to attend your Local Lodge business meeting. Each Local Lodge must have a quorum to conduct business. The following is a schedule for upcoming meetings:

Houston: Tuesday, December 16, 2008, 1:00 p.m. at 15710 JFK Blvd

Guam: Wednesday, December 17, 2008, 4:00 p.m. at the Airport Conference Room

Cleveland: Thursday, January 8, 2009, 1:00 p.m. at 669 North Rocky River Drive

Newark: Tuesday, January 13, 2009, 3:00 p.m. at the Renaissance Newark Airport Hotel